Removal of economically well off from P.D.S.

170. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering removing the economically well off from the ambit of the public distribution system;

(b) whether there is a plan to provide more foodgrains to those who are below poverty line; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) introduced in June, 1997, foodgrains are provided to the State/Union Territories at specially subsidised Central Issue Prices (CIP) for issue to the people living below poverty line (BPL) @ 10 kg. per family per month. The demand for increasing the entitlement of BPL families has been raised from various quarters. Consensus is needed for providing more foodgrains to BPL under TPDS given the constraints of limited availability of foodgrains and subsidy. The Government is engaged in discussions with the State Governments—no, decision, however, has been taken.

Effect of subsidy reduction of PDS and TPDS

171. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Finance off and on make it public that subsidy would be reduced and in certain cases removed; and